

MOREEN BLUM

HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my good friend, Moreen Blum, who was recently honored by the Sherman Oaks Democratic Club for her outstanding contributions to democratic politics in the San Fernando Valley. I have known Moreen for over two decades and have had the pleasure of working with her on many important issues in our community.

A long time volunteer in local politics, Moreen was born in Cleveland, Ohio. She joined the Navy when she was twenty years old and was a member of the Waves until 1952. Shortly after moving to Los Angeles in 1959, she formed the West Hollywood Democratic Club and was a Golden Girl at the John F. Kennedy nominating convention. Currently, she is President Emeritus of the Sherman Oaks Democratic Club, and is very active as the president and founder of the Summerville Democratic Club. Her noteworthy achievements were recognized by the Democratic Party of the San Fernando Valley, as she was presented with the Dorothy Mayer Award. She serves as a worthy example to all political activists.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I ask you to join me in saluting Moreen Blum for her impressive career and dedication to the people of the San Fernando Valley.

**HONORING THE HEROISM OF
CHRIS LEVI**
HON. PETER T. KING

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, poet and Capitol Tour Guide Albert C. Caswell has penned a poem in honor of Sp. E4 Chris Levi of The North Brigade 410/230 10th Mountain, from Holbrook Long Island. On March 17th 2008, in Sadr City Iraq, Chris lost both of his legs when an EFP struck him. Miraculously, he somehow cheated death. And now like all of our magnificent heroes of the military, who have given their most precious limbs, Chris begins his new fight. A fight that he is winning, winning with his great heart of faith and courage. As like Bob Dole, he too will be an inspiration to us all, for the rest of his life, as we witness the true meaning of the word Hero, all in our time.

10TH MOUNTAIN MEN

10th Mountain Men . . .
Are but those my friends, who will this our
nation so defend . . .
Who but in times of war, all for country bore
. . . the greatest of all burdens, until
the bitter end.
Brilliant Men, who run and fight . . .
Who climb mountains, knock down doors
. . . and go through walls to win that
night . . .
Who with but their brave hearts so ignite,
the fight for freedom to so bring the
light!
For well over the many years . . .
There have been so many magnificent heroes,
so dear!

Men like Chris Levi, and Bob Dole . . . who
are but our Lord's greatest of all men
endeared . . .

Are such Men to behold, who with but their
fine hearts of gold . . .

With such great inspiration inspire us all so
. . . to so warm one's soul . . .

To carry with us as we grow old, in heart's
of love so . . . such honor, for them we
now so hold!

A New York Man . . . who so boldly in Long
Island ran . . .

Who from Suffolk, without fear . . . with
such great courage would so stand . . .

So stand, therein face of death . . . and then
to return back home with almost nothing
left . . .

Who gave up but his two fine strong legs . . .
As he won't moan, and he won't beg . . . As
he starts his brilliant life all over
again . . .

With but his fine heart and soul, showing us
all in life . . . But where lies man-
kind's true gold.

As step by step . . .
The new pain and heartache, somehow he so
accepts . . . as this hero is not done
yet!

For He Will Reach Us, as He Will So Teach
Us . . . as oh yes, as each of us . . . he
Will So Bless . . .
But, with his fine heart of honor so . . .
He now so stands, with all of his band of
brothers . . . such great respect he now
so commands!

All of our hearts and souls, as he battles
through those winds so cold . . . mak-
ing us all so understand.
That in the end, it's but only with our heart
we win!

Arms and legs surely we all need, but with-
out a great heart . . . one cannot so
breath . . . to succeed!

To start all over again . . . Chris, you are
America's fine son of faith and glory,
bless you . . . Godspeed . . .

In life, there are so many Mountains we
must climb!

But, only with such unshaken faith and cour-
age, will one so find . . .

All of those fine things, that which so bring
such tears to even the Angels' eyes . . .
In Chris Levi . . .

We so surely see, what the word hero so im-
plies!

And if I ever have a son, I but hope and pray.
. . . That he will be like you this fine
one . . . Chris Levi . . .

**IN HONOR OF PRESIDENT MA'S
FIRST ANNIVERSARY IN OFFICE
AS PRESIDENT OF TAIWAN**
HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, Mr. Ma Ying-jeou was inaugurated as President of Republic of China (Taiwan) on May 20, 2008. During the last twelve months there has been a considerable reduction of tension across the Taiwan Strait and there have been productive talks between the two sides on issues such as direct airline flights, an economic accord protecting investments, more tourist visits by mainlanders to Taiwan.

President Ma has also been working closely with the U.S. government. The mutual relationship between our two countries is strong. We hope that the relations will grow even stronger in all areas, including trade, science and tech-

nology, educational exchange, military sales and Taiwan's participation in international agencies.

It is heartening to learn that Taiwan has been invited to attend this year's World Health Assembly (WHA) in Geneva, Switzerland from May 19 to May 27 as an observer. This is a breakthrough for the Taiwanese government; it is Taiwan's first participation in a formal U.N. activity since 1971, when the world body switched its recognition to mainland China.

In celebrating President Ma's first anniversary in office, I join my Congressional colleagues in hoping that Taiwan's participation in the WHA this May will lead to Taiwan's future successes in returning to other international organizations.

**INTRODUCTION OF THE VETERANS
GROUP LIFE INSURANCE IM-
PROVEMENT ACT OF 2009**
HON. STEVE BUYER

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. BUYER. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the Veterans' Group Life Insurance Improvement Act of 2009 which increases the amount of life insurance available to veterans. Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI) is administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs. The purpose of this program is to give veterans the option to convert their Servicemembers Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage that they carry when they are in service to a competitive life insurance product for them and their family in post-military life.

Under current law, veterans have up to one year to convert the amount of SGLI coverage they carry to VGLI. Many separating servicemembers are young and don't see the need to carry a large amount of life insurance coverage. However, as they get older and have a family, many of these servicemembers have expressed a desire to purchase additional coverage but are barred from doing so under current law.

The Veterans' Group Life Insurance Improvement Act of 2009 allows veterans to purchase up to \$400,000 of VGLI coverage in \$50,000 increments, every five years, until the age of 60. The costs of such increases in coverage will be offset by premiums veterans pay, so there is no direct cost to the government. This bill gives our veterans greater flexibility in their life insurance choices and I urge all members to co-sponsor and support this legislation.

**A TRIBUTE TO CONSTANCE V HAY-
ALLEYNE**
HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. TOWNS. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Constance V. Hay-Alleyne.

Constance has lived life as a goal oriented and knowledgeable Registered Nurse with ambitious and humanitarian social motivations. Constance is well known in the Panamanian and Caribbean communities. Her delightful intellectual curiosity has served her professional

growth well. She holds a BSN and MSN degrees from Medgar Evers College in Brooklyn, New York and Georgetown University, in Washington D.C., respectively. She has distinguished herself as a competent Nurse Manager and Administrator for over three decades, in the Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Washington D.C. areas. In 1981, she joined the United States Army Nurses Corps, served as a Captain, active duty and in reserve.

At home, Constance has raised her four children to love and respect everyone especially their elders. She encouraged them to have positive outlooks in life and motivation to do "as much as they can" with care and dignity. It could not be otherwise since this has been an inheritance from her parents: John who died at the age of 114 and Imogene, at age 82. Faithful to that motto, she has been involved in many other activities such as a mediator at the Safe Horizon Brooklyn Mediation Center, as a Board Member of the Community Board 5 and as the Chair for Education and Training for Tashia's Life, a lupus foundation.

She was miraculously rescued from the September 11, 2001 disaster at World Trade Center. This encounter made her redefine her mission on earth, realizing that God had saved her life for some special purpose. She serves the Lord at St. Alban's Episcopal Church in Canarsie, Brooklyn, where she functions as a Lay Ecumenical Minister, as well as a Vestry.

Throughout her career, Mrs. Hay-Alleyne has received numerous awards and recognitions including: being featured in "Who's Who?" in Nursing in Cambridge.

SPEECH OF

RECOGNIZING NATIONAL FOSTER CARE MONTH

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, on any given day there are nearly a half million children in our nation's foster care system. These children have endured more pain and suffering in their short lives than many of us could ever imagine. Not only do they experience the physical and emotional trauma that is connected to their mistreatment, but they also face the grief of being separated from their siblings, extended family, friends, and their community. The foster care system serves as a safe sanctuary for these young people and provides services and support to help ease their suffering. It is in the foster care system that children find the help they need to address their pain, and where families can receive the services they need to safely restore their bond with their children. And when it is not possible to safely reunify a child with their parents, it is through the foster care system that a child finds a permanent home with a relative caregiver or an adoptive family.

The month of May is National Foster Care Month. It provides the nation with an opportunity to acknowledge the wonderful contributions of the countless men and women who dedicate their lives to assisting children and families, such as case workers and administrators, child and family advocates, research-

ers, volunteers, and community organizations such as the Child Welfare Organizing Project, which is doing fantastic work in my district. National Foster Care Month provides us with an opportunity to commend those individuals and families who open up their homes and lives to our most vulnerable children by becoming a foster parent. Foster parents step in to serve as a surrogate mom and dad to children when their parents are not there to comfort and care for them. Their services are invaluable in helping these children overcome their grief and move forward in their lives.

National Foster Care Month also provides us with an opportunity to evaluate our foster care system. Congress made great strides last fall in passing comprehensive, bipartisan legislation that strengthened the child welfare system. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act provided new resources to the system and included policy changes aimed at improving the outcomes of children in care. The legislation has significantly improved the lives of foster children by facilitating their connection to extended family, supporting grandparents and other relative caregivers who care for these children, providing support to older youth in their transition to adulthood, ensuring the health care and educational needs of every child are met, ending the discriminatory practices against Native American children who are under the supervision of tribal governments, enhancing federal training assistance for child welfare workers and court personnel, and strengthening the federal adoption assistance program. The Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act represented the most significant reform in the child welfare system in over a decade. I am proud of the bipartisan work that the Committee on Ways and Means did in developing the underlying legislation that led to the comprehensive bill. Nevertheless, there is still a great deal of work that needs to be done.

Despite the success of last fall's legislation, Congress needs to remain committed to further strengthening the foster care system and addressing some of the problems that have plagued it for years. Children of color are disproportionately over-represented in foster care. African American and Native American children are removed from their homes and placed in foster care at much higher rates than their white peers. Tragically, once they are removed from their homes, they are more likely to remain in the system for longer periods of time. This problem transcends urban areas and occurs across our nation, affecting not only New York, Michigan and Illinois, but States such as Iowa, Washington State and Minnesota. Many of the provisions included in the Fostering Connections the Success and Increasing Adoptions Act will help to begin to address this problem, yet more reform is still needed.

I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating National Foster Care Month by saluting the people who come to the aid of our most vulnerable children and families, as well as the men and women who are, or were formerly in, the foster care system. These individuals represent some of our bravest men and women who have overcome a level of grief and suffering that some will never experience in their lifetime. Yet, these remarkable people go on to lead successful lives, often exceeding their wildest expectations. Many of them now volun-

teer their time and expertise to efforts to improve the lives of those children who are currently in the system, championing their cause in State legislatures and throughout the halls of Congress. I salute these fine men and women for the example that they set for all Americans.

RECOGNIZING ZUNI ELEMENTARY'S 20TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Zuni Elementary School in Scottsdale, Arizona. Zuni, first opened its doors to students in the fall of 1989. This fall, Zuni will merge with another nearby school to become Redbird Elementary.

In its two decade existence, Zuni earned many awards of distinction, most notably the Honor Council Excellence Award from the American Student Council Association and the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Zuni earned this award every year since 1993, a remarkable accomplishment. Since 2005, Zuni has received the Arizona Department of Education's highest ranking of "Excelling School."

In addition to its educational successes, Zuni's philanthropic efforts have been an inspiration to our community. Over the past 12 years, Zuni Elementary raised over \$106,000 as part of the Jump Rope for Heart campaign that supports heart disease and stroke research by the American Heart Association.

As a former teacher, I personally understand the importance of building a strong educational foundation during elementary school. I would like to congratulate the Zuni Coyotes—teachers, students, and parents—on this exceptional milestone.

Madam Speaker, please join me in recognizing Zuni Elementary on its 20 outstanding years of educational excellence and dedication to scholastic achievement.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TIMOTHY V. JOHNSON

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 13, 2009

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois. Madam Speaker, unfortunately last night, May 12, 2009, I was unable to cast my votes on the Motion to Table the Flake Question of Privilege, H. Res. 413 and H. Res. 378 and wish the record to reflect my intentions had I been able to vote.

Had I been present for rollcall No. 243, on the Motion to Table Representative FLAKE's Question of Privilege, I would have voted "nay."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 244, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 413, Supporting the goals and ideals of "IEEE Engineering the Future" Day on May 13, 2009, I would have voted "yea."

Had I been present for rollcall No. 245, on suspending the Rules and passing H. Res. 378, Recognizing the 30th anniversary of the